

Message Text

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DISTO

FOLLOWING REPEAT LAHORE 731 ACION SECSTATE INFO NEW DELHI
SLAMABAD DACCA HONG KONG KARACHI KABUL LONDON MOSCOW
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QUOTE

UNCLAS LAHORE 0731

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TECH, PFOR, IN, PK

SUBJECT: BHUTTO DISCUSSES INDIAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION

REF: ISLAMABAD 4833 NOTAL

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN MAY 19 PRESS CONFERENCE AT LAHORE,
PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED PAKISTAN'S DETERMINATION NOT
TO BE INTIMIDATED BY EXPLOSION OF INDIAN NUCLEAR DEVICE,
ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED THAT NATION'S ANXIETY WAS "UNPARALLELED."
CALLING UPON PEOPLE TO AVOID BOTH COMPLACENCE AND
NERVOUSNESS, BHUTTO ANNOUNCED THAT GOP PLANNED TO SEEK
NUCLEAR UMBRELLA FROM FIVE PERMANENT MEMBERS OF UNSC.
HE MAINTAINED THAT PAKISTAN WOULD CONTINUE TO SEEK
NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH INDIA, BUT WOULD NOT
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COMPROMISE ON ISSUE OF KASHMIR OR ACCEPT INDIAN HEGEMONY IN

SUBCONTINENT. HE INDICATED THAT GOP WOULD PURSUE "COHERENT NUCLEAR PROGRAM," BUT STATED HE DID NOT MEAN TO IMPLY THAT PAKISTAN WOULD EMBARK UPON COURSE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO HELD PRESS CONFERENCE IN LAHORE EVENING MAY 19 TO OUTLINE GOP ATTITUDE TOWARD EXPLOSION OF INDIAN NUCLEAR DEVICE. BHUTTO READ PREPARED STATEMENT (TEXT BEING POUCHED TO DEPT) AND ANSWERED QUESTIONS FOR ABOUT 20 MINUTES. IN PREPARED TEXT, PRIME MINISTER DECLARED THAT PAKISTAN WAS DETERMINED NOT TO BE INTIMIDATED, AND PLEDGED THAT HE WOULD NEVER ALLOW COUNTRY TO BECOME "VICTIM OF NUCLEAR BLACKMAIL." HE CALLED UPON PAKISTANIS TO AVOID BOTH COMPLACENCE AND NERVOUSNESS, BUT ADMITTED THAT PAKISTAN'S ANXIETY WAS "UNPARALLELED."

2. BHUTTO ADVISED PUBLIC THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE NOT LIKE CONVENTIONAL MILITARY WEAPONS, BUT ARE TODAY PRIMARILY INSTRUMENTS OF COERCION AGAINST NATIONS WHICH DO NOT POSSESS NUCLEAR WEAPONS. FOR THIS REASON, HE THOUGHT PAKISTAN'S BEST DEFENSE AGAINST POTENTIAL NUCLEAR THREAT FROM INDIA WAS TO TAKE "POLITICAL COUNTERMEASURES." IN THAT REGARD, HE ASSERTED THAT UNITED NATIONS HAD "DUTY TO ADDRESS ITSELF MORE VIGOROUSLY TO THE QUESTION OF CREDIBLE SECURITY ASSURANCES AGAINST NUCLEAR THREAT OR BLACKMAIL TO ALL NON-NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES." HE DECRIED EXISTING ASSURANCES OF UNSC, USSR AND USG AS LACKING CREDIBILITY, AND CALLED FOR JOINT OBLIGATION BY ALL PERMANENT MEMBERS OF UNSC TO PROTECT STATES FACING NUCLEAR THREAT.

3. IN SEEKING ASSURANCES AND SUPPORT FOR CONCEPT OF NUCLEAR UMBRELLA, PRIME MINISTER ANNOUNCED THAT HE AND OTHER GOP OFFICIALS WOULD SOON APPROACH UNSYG AND NUMBER OF INDIVIDUAL GOVERNMENTS. BHUTTO HIMSELF PLANS TO DISCUSS MATTER WITH SOVIET LEADERS DURING FORTHCOMING VISIT. HE HAS INSTRUCTED MINISTER OF STATE AZIZ AHMED TO RAISE ISSUE AT UPCOMING CENTO MEETING IN WASHINGTON, AND TO MAKE URGENT APPROACHES TO GOVERNMENTS OF US AND CANADA THEREAFTER. FOREIGN SECRETARY AGHA SHAHI IS TO BE SENT TO CHINA, FRANCE UNCLASSIFIED

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AND UK. BHUTTO ADDED THAT HE WOULD ADDRESS PERSONAL LETTERS TO HEADS OF STATES AND GOVERNMENTS OF ALL NATIONS POSSESSING NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

4. PRIME MINISTER CLAIMED GOP HAD REPEATEDLY WARNED "GREAT POWERS" AND CANADA IN PAST THAT INDIA WOULD "BETRAY" BILATERAL AGREEMENT WITH CANADA, BUT SAID WARNINGS WENT UNHEEDED. HE NOTED THAT PRODUCTION OF PLUTONIUM FOR

INDIAN DEVICE TOOK PLACE AT CANADA-INDIA REACTOR, AND SAID HE WAS "HARDLY RELIEVED" THAT CANADIAN GOVERNMENT HAD EXPRESSED ITSELF AS "VERY DISTURBED" BY EXPLOSION. HE ASSERTED THAT HE HAD CONSISTENTLY ARGUED THAT PAKISTAN SHOULD UNDERTAKE PROGRAM OF NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT ON GROUNDS OF NATIONAL SECURITY, IGNORING QUESTION OF ECONOMIC VIABILITY. IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES, BHUTTO BELIEVED IT "DIRE NECESSITY" TO HAVE ACCELERATED AND COHERENT GOP NUCLEAR PROGRAM FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES LIKE MINERAL EXPLORATION. HE QUICKLY ADDED THAT HE DID NOT MEAN TO IMPLY THAT PAKISTAN WOULD FORESAKE "POLITICAL ALTERNATIVE" AND EMBARK UPON COURSE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS DEVELOPMENT. BUT HE CAUTIONED THAT COUNTRIES THAT REFUSED TO ASSIST PAKISTAN IN PEACEFUL PROGRAM WOULD BE CONSIDERED "UNFRIENDLY".

5. IN COMMENTING ON EFFECT OF EXPLOSION UPON PROCESS OF NORMALIZATION IN SUBCONTINENT, BHUTTO SAID HE COULD NOT SEE RELEVANCE OF "NUCLEAR EXERCISE" TO IMMEDIATE POLITICAL SETTING OF SUBCONTINENT. HE SAID GOP WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK TOWARD NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH INDIA, UNLESS INDIANS SOUGHT TO REVERSE PROCESS. HOWEVER, HE DECLARED THAT GOP WOULD NOT COMPROMISE ON KASHMIR ISSUE, WOULD NOT CONSIDER SIGNING "NO-WAR PACT" WITH GOI, AND WOULD NEVER ACCEPT INDIAN HEGEMONY OR DOMINATION OF SUBCONTINENT.

6. EMBASSY ISLAMABAD IS PREPARING COORDINATED SEPTEL ON REACTION AND COMMENT.
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